

REMARKS

In the Office Action¹, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 6, and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Kim (U.S. Patent No. 6,617,628 B2, hereafter "Kim"); rejected claims 3-5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kim in view of Kasahara (U.S. Patent No. 6,340,832 B2, hereafter "Kasahara"); and rejected claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kim in view of Azuma et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,814,849, hereafter "Azuma").

Applicant has amended claims 1, 4, 5, and 7. Claims 1, 3-7, and 10 are presented for examination, and claims 8, 9, and 11-15 are withdrawn from consideration.

At the outset, Applicant notes that claim 1 has been amended to recite that the "first outer end of the second electrode extends in a first direction parallel to a main surface of the semiconductor substrate and is entirely positioned outside the first electrode" and "the second outer end of the second electrode extends in a second direction opposite the first direction and is entirely positioned outside the first electrode." Support for the claimed second electrode can be found in the drawings, for example, which show first and second outer ends of electrode 123a extending in opposite directions, e.g., to the right and left, respectively, in Fig. 8. As further shown in Fig. 8, both outer ends of electrode 123a are entirely positioned outside electrode 125a.

Claim 1 has been further amended to recite that the "first outer end of the third electrode is entirely positioned outside the second electrode and extends in the first

¹ The Office Action contains a number of statements reflecting characterizations of the related art and the claims. Regardless of whether any such statement is identified herein, Applicant declines to automatically subscribe to any statement or characterization in the Office Action.

direction parallel to the main surface of the semiconductor substrate” and the “second outer end of the third electrode is entirely positioned outside the second electrode and extends in the second direction.” Support for the claimed third electrode, may also be found in the drawings, for example, Fig. 8, which shows electrode 121a having first and second outer ends extending to the right and left, respectively. Thus, Fig. 8 illustrates the first and second outer ends of electrode 121a extending in opposite directions. In addition, Fig. 8 shows the first and second outer ends of electrode 121a being entirely positioned outside electrode 123a.

Support for Applicant’s changes to claim 1 may also be found in the specification, for example, at page 16, lines 13-19.

Applicant further notes that dependent claims 4, 6, and 7 have been amended to improve readability and clarity in light of the changes to claim 1.

Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner’s rejection of claims 1, 6, and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Kim. Amended claim 1, for example, is not anticipated by Kim because the reference fails to teach each and every element of the claim. In particular, Kim at least fails to teach the claimed second and third electrodes, each having first and second outer ends, such that the first and second outer ends of the second electrode are “entirely positioned outside the first electrode” and the first and second outer ends of the third electrode are “entirely positioned outside the second electrode,” as recited in amended claim 1.

In rejecting claim 1, the Examiner apparently contends that a left-most portion of middle electrode 67 in Fig. 5B of Kim is “entirely positioned outside” upper electrode 69, and a right-most portion of lower electrode 65 is “entirely positioned outside” middle

electrode 67. See Final Office Action at page 5. Kim, however, discloses a left-most end portion of lower electrode 65 that is not entirely positioned outside middle electrode 67. See Fig. 5B. Rather, the left-most end portions of electrodes 65 and 67 appear to be aligned with one another. Likewise, Fig. 5B illustrates right-most end portions of electrodes 67 and 69, which are also aligned with one another such that the right-most portion of middle electrode 67 is not entirely positioned outside upper electrode 69. Applicant respectfully notes that the Examiner concedes as much in the Final Office Action. (“[T]he right end of middle electrode 67 is not positioned outside upper electrode 69, and the left end of lower electrode 65 is not positioned outside middle electrode 67.” Final Office Action at pages 4-5.) Accordingly, Kim fails to teach the claimed first and second outer ends of the second electrode being “entirely positioned outside the first electrode” and extending in first and second directions, respectively, wherein the first direction is opposite the second direction. In addition, Kim fails to disclose the claimed third electrode having first and second outer ends that are “entirely positioned outside” the second electrode and extend in the first and second directions, respectively, as recited in amended claim 1.

In view of the above-described deficiencies of Kim, claim 1 is allowable over the applied reference, and claims 6 and 7 are allowable at least due to their dependence from claim 1.

Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner’s rejection of claims 3-5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kim in view of Kashahara; and the rejection of claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kim in view of Azuma. Kasahara and Azuma are each silent as to the claimed second and third electrodes,

each having first and second outer ends. Moreover, the Examiner does not rely on either reference for teaching "an outer end of the second electrode [being] entirely positioned outside the first electrode" nor "an outer end of the third electrode [being] entirely positioned outside the second electrode." Kasahara and Azuma, therefore, both fail to overcome the above-noted shortcomings of Kim, and claims 3-5 and 10 are allowable at least due to their dependence from claim 1.

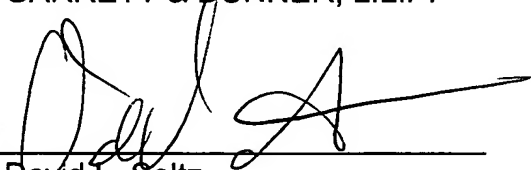
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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